

which is really important. That still puts us behind Europe, Japan, and China, but it is a critical step in the right direction and will save up to 1 billion gallons of gas every day. Think about that—1 billion gallons of gasoline every day. I don't know how big a tank a billion gallons is. I do know that we use 21 billion barrels of oil every day in America, 65 percent of which is imported. I know how big a hole that is. It is the width of a football field, 11 miles long and 10 feet deep.

For the automakers still wavering on increasing fuel efficiency, I say this: Do not fight the change; embrace it. There is no reason our automobile manufacturers cannot do this. There is no reason. Others do it all over the world. Cannot we as Americans do it? Of course we can. They need to embrace the opportunity to build the high performance cars and trucks Americans want to buy and drive and which we so desperately need for the sake of our national security and global warming. It is time for American automobile manufacturers to lead the world once again. That will only come through a commitment to clean innovation.

The next part of the bill that passed reduces crude oil consumption by more than 10 percent over the next 15 years by producing more renewable fuels, by producing them right here at home, more renewable fuels on America's farms, fields, and in our forests, which will create tens of thousands of new American jobs.

We set new energy efficiency standards with light bulbs, light fixtures, appliances, water heaters, boilers, air conditioners, which will save half a trillion gallons of water every year. For a State such as Nevada—Las Vegas gets 4 inches of rain every year—that is dramatic.

Because Government should lead by example, we also dramatically improved the energy efficiency of Federal buildings and vehicles, as relates to energy, which will save billions of American taxpayer dollars.

Senator BOXER has a provision in this bill that relates to the capture of carbon. It is a carbon capture study at the Capitol powerplant, and it also requires 15 percent of every bit of energy we use on this Capitol Hill complex—by the way, there are more than 10,000 employees here—that we need to get that from renewable sources.

We need to invest in the technologies that will drive our energy future, such as carbon capture and storage, that hold the hope of containing carbon emissions from producing power sources before they ever reach the air.

Last night's passage of the Energy bill was a great victory for the American people. Here is why: We will save American consumers tens of billions of dollars annually, cut our oil consumption by 7 million barrels a day within 20 years, reduce our dependence on foreign energy sources now, and take critical steps in these early stages of our

fight against global warming. There is a long way to go to secure the kind of clean and safe energy future we need. This bill is a first step, but it is an important first step.

The bill is not perfect. It is unfortunate that in passing this bill the administration and most Senate Republicans blocked an effort to require more of our Nation's electricity to come from renewable sources as well as incentives to spur the production of more renewable fuels right here in America. But this fight is not over. Our friends in the House will pass their bill quickly so we can send it to the President for his signature. But this bill, once again, shows us when we find common ground, we can accomplish uncommon good.

Mr. President, I see that my friend and partner in what happens here in the Senate is here, Senator DURBIN.

I have already expressed, Senator DURBIN, my appreciation for the work you did in getting to the final passage of this bill. You and I spend so much time alone that I do not often get to say anything publicly about you, so I will take a brief moment to say you and I have been in the legislature, on a national basis, since 1982 together. We have had good days and bad days. That is what legislation is all about. But I so appreciate having you as a partner here in the Senate. You have been stalwart. The people of Illinois are so fortunate to have you representing them in the Senate. I hope I can tell you in this manner how much I admire and appreciate your advocacy, your friendship, and the good work you do for all of our country.

#### RESERVATION OF LEADER TIME

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. Under the previous order, the leadership time is reserved.

#### MORNING BUSINESS

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. Under the previous order, there will now be a period for the transaction of morning business, with Senators permitted to speak for up to 10 minutes each.

The assistant majority leader is recognized.

#### PASSAGE OF H.R. 6

Mr. DURBIN. Mr. President, thank you for recognizing me. Also I want to thank the majority leader for his kind words. He and I work very closely together, spend more time together than we ever imagined as we embarked on this journey, now in leadership, to try to serve the people of this Nation.

I want to say a word about my friend from Nevada. Senator HARRY REID is misunderstood by many Americans. Because he is soft spoken, and not as assertive as some politicians are, there are many on the outside who question

his leadership capacity. No one on the inside questions it. He is the most highly respected leader I have ever had the good fortune to work with. It is based on the fact that he is inclusive, he is honest, outspoken, and stands by those who are willing to work harder to achieve our agenda.

Last night was a perfect illustration of this. The Energy bill was just a dream, a theory, for so long. The question was, could we put together a bipartisan coalition. We had to find a level of compromise and a level of cooperation or we did not have a chance. It was not easy to try to put into law, for the first time in over 20 years, a new national goal for fuel efficiency of our cars and trucks. It changed a lot of things and was viewed as threatening by many people.

My wife and I have made a point of doing our very best to buy American cars. We are loyal to the American automobile industry. With very few exceptions we have tried to make sure our purchases were on behalf of American workers. It was painful last night to be engaged in a debate where my good friends in the automobile industry, not just management—but I guess I have to be totally open with you, I am closer to those who work the lines, in Belvidere, IL and Bloomington, the United Auto Worker employees. I know these men and women. These are good people. They are hard-working people. They take pride in what they do.

They have been disappointed. I have as well. But our automobile industry in this country has been falling farther and farther behind. Just a few months ago, the CEOs, the major corporate officers of the Big Three came, just a few feet away, and met with the leadership in Congress. I had a chance to ask a question of the CEOs of Ford and General Motors and Chrysler. I asked a pretty hard question, but it was one that has been bothering me.

I said to them at the time: You know, I am one of your most loyal customers. I have owned cars and trucks from each of your companies and plan on continuing to try to buy your products in the future. But I am troubled because of the simple fact—I asked them—I said: Have any of you ever heard of a magazine called "Consumer Reports"?

There was this kind of embarrassed silence in the room. I said: Well, I want you to explain something to me. Why, for the last 20 years, have American cars consistently shown poorer performance results than imported cars? Why have foreign cars, particularly from Japan, over the last 20 years consistently shown better performance results, better trade-in value? Why? What has been happening out there? We have the best engineering schools in the world. We started this industry, at least on a mass volume basis. Why is there such a difference in quality?

There was this pained silence while they waited for one of them to respond. Finally, one of the CEOs said: Well, we are getting better.

I said: I hope you are.

But the bottom line is, this industry now has been challenged. If the bill we passed last night is passed in the House of Representatives and becomes law, they will face a challenge. I, for one, believe they can rise to this challenge. I honestly do. It is going to call for a different mindset among the management at the highest levels in our automobile companies. It is going to call for the same spirit of can-do approach we have seen on the assembly lines from the workers. I think they can rise to this challenge.

I think America wants them to. I want to buy a car made in this country by American workers that is of the highest quality, that I can take pride in driving, knowing it is not only a good bargain for my family, but also a good deal for the environment.

That, I think, is what most Americans want to do. Now, that means there is going to have to be some new thinking. It means a lot of people in the boardrooms of those major companies are going to have to sit down and rethink their game plan.

I met with the man who is about to become the leader of Chrysler Corporation. He was talking about the fact that his private equity bought Chrysler because of their patriotic feelings. They do not want this great American car manufacturer to go away.

Well, I know if you are in business, sentimentality takes you so far. At some point you have to produce a profitable product. I think there is a profitability product built into the Energy bill we talked about last night. I believe if there is a conscious effort by our automobile manufacturers, they can meet these fuel efficiency standards we have included in our bill.

They can convince a lot of skeptical Americans it is time to come back home, to start buying these American cars. Now, it will be a painful process. There will be winners and losers. But, ultimately, I have confidence in this country, in the companies that work in this country, and in the workers of this country. When they come together, they can achieve great things.

Last night we set down a challenge to them: Change what you are selling in America. Make it a better product. Make it a more efficient product. Make it a product that is going to help us deal with global warming and climate change.

I think most American families are on board for that agenda. That is why I think the passage of this was so important. We never would have passed this energy bill late last night were it not for a bipartisan effort. We had many Republicans who crossed the aisle to join us. I think ultimately 17 or 18 came over to join the Democrats in the key procedural vote that moved this forward. Then the final vote was 65 to 27; there were even more.

We could have never achieved this goal of a new energy bill were it not for bipartisan cooperation, if Republicans had not come forward.

For some, it wasn't easy. When the Republican Senate leader, Mr. MCCONNELL of Kentucky, stood up last night late in the debate and said: I want this debate to end, I want this bill to be defeated, I am going to vote no on the cloture motion—I heard him make that announcement—I was stunned. This is a bill which the administration believes has good elements relative to fuel economy. Yet the Republican leader stood on the floor and said: I am going to try to stop this bill. He did not prevail because 17 or 18 of his colleagues thought it was more important that the bill move forward. I salute them. It took extraordinary courage for them to do what they did.

There was another element in the Energy bill which is important to me because of my midwestern roots and because of my determination to see America shake its dependence on foreign oil. I am sick and tired of the United States hat in hand begging for oil from countries overseas. Many of these nations we turn to for oil don't share our values. In fact, some of them are on the wrong side in the war on terrorism. To think that every time you swipe that credit card through the gasoline pump or put the money on the counter, a portion of that is going to a nation which is funding terrorism is an outrage. It has to end. To think that time and again our brave soldiers, men and women in uniform, are drawn into conflicts in the Middle East because of oil is unacceptable. I don't want my grandchildren to face that. I want America to be as close to energy independent as possible. How do we reach that goal? Homegrown fuel, homegrown energy. We grow it in my State every year, a new crop of corn. With that new crop of corn, more ethanol, more alcohol fuels, and more biodiesel come from the soybean fields. That means we have less of a need to import oil.

Last night, in this bill, we raised to a much higher level our national goals when it comes to alcohol fuels, renewable fuels. It means a growing industry in my part of the world, in the Midwest, in Iowa, Illinois, Ohio, where ethanol plants are being built. These plants use local production of agriculture, corn by and large, and turn it into alcohol. The construction workers are building the plants, good-paying jobs. There are people at the plants making sure they are producing ethanol. They are shipping products in trucks driven by Americans to put in the cars driven by Americans. I feel good about this. We are moving in the right direction.

This bill made a significant commitment to strengthen the market for alcohol fuels. I was disappointed that my biodiesel program was not included. I wish it had been. I am not giving up. We have a farm bill coming up. We will have several other opportunities. I think biodiesel is great. It uses soybeans and other oilseeds to produce a vegetable oil added to diesel fuel so

that we don't see that huge plume of black smoke coming out of the tailpipes of diesel trucks and cars, so there is less pollution. More homegrown energy is a good thing for the country. I want to include it as part of the energy picture.

This was a hard debate over the last 2 weeks. I am sorry it took 2 weeks. We wasted more time on the floor. I am sure the people who have C-SPAN on their cable often turn to it and say: What in the world is going on in the Senate? It doesn't look like there is any movement. Is anybody alive down there? The floor looks empty except for the handsome and beautiful staff we have here who are on television during the day. Many times there are periods when there is no activity. Time is wasted. There was time wasted on this bill. Time and again, the Republican minority forced us to wait 30 hours, file a motion, wait another 30 hours.

We have a lot to do. I think we owe it to the American people to roll up our sleeves and get it done. We need more bipartisan cooperation. We need to put an end to these endless motions and procedural delays. Let's get down to business. Wouldn't the American people cheer us if we said: Let's pass the 9/11 recommendations and turn them into law to make America safer; let's do something immediately about No Child Left Behind to send money to the schools so they can hire the very best teachers and produce students who are ready to compete in the 21st century. Wouldn't the American people cheer us if, instead of being lost in some procedural morass day after weary day, we came up with a way to help working families pay for college education expenses for their children so they don't end up graduating deep in debt and unable to take the jobs they had their hearts set on?

There are so many things we need to do. With a little cooperation from the other side of the aisle and a better approach, we can say to our Republican friends: You are entitled under the rules of the Senate to produce amendments, to ask for a vote, to ask for debate. But at some point, it has to come to an end. At some point, we have to move forward.

#### EMPLOYEE FREE CHOICE ACT

Mr. DURBIN. Mr. President, we are going to have a bill come up next week, a critically important bill known as the Employee Free Choice Act. I confess I come into this debate with strong feelings. I am a product of a family where my mother and father, my two brothers, and I were all members of labor unions. This was during a period where the labor movement created the middle class in America. It was World War II's aftermath. All of the returning veterans had an appetite to build homes, start families, open schools, and create the kind of middle-income working families who are the bedrock of America's democracy. The organization that helped these Americans move